

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 DPW-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00  
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 SCS-03 SCA-01  
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APPROVED BY D/HA/PW:FSIEVERTS  
EA/TB:MR. HELBLE  
DOD/ISA:CAPT. VOHD  
EA/VLC:JDROSENTHAL  
-----102327Z 114116 /75-62

O 102151Z MAR 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE  
CINCPAC IMMEDIATE  
JCRC BARBERS PT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 053632

E.O. 11652: GDS-2

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, US, VN

SUBJECT: POW/MIA REPORT

1. UPI MARCH 10 CARRIED ALAN DAWSON REPORT FROM BANGKOK  
(TEXT BELOW) QUOTING UNIDENTIFIED "DEFECTOR" FROM VIETNAM  
TO EFFECT THAT IT IS "COMMON KNOWLEDGE" THAT AMERICANS  
CAPTURED IN THE INDOCHINA CONFLICT REMAIN ALIVE IN NORTH  
VIETNAM. ACCORDING TO DAWSON'S REPORT, SOME AMERICANS MAY  
HAVE CHOSEN TO STAY BEHIND AND HAVE TAKEN VIETNAMESE WIVES.

2. WE KNOW OF NO INFORMATION TO SUPPORT THIS STORY, WHICH  
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STRIKES US AS SIMILAR TO RUMORS OF US "DEFECTORS" IN NORTH  
AND SOUTH VIETNAM THAT HAVE PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED.

3. NONETHELESS, IN VIEW OF FORTHCOMING PRESIDENTIAL  
COMMISSION TRIP TO HANOI (MARCH 16-19), REQUEST EMBASSY  
CONTACT DAWSON AND OBTAIN FULLEST POSSIBLE BACKGROUND ON  
STORY, INCLUDING CONTACT WITH ALLEGED DEFECTOR IF POSSIBLE.

IF ANY SUBSTANCE CAN BE OBTAINED THE COMMISSION WOULD OF COURSE BE IN A POSITION TO FOLLOW UP WHEN IT REACHES VIETNAM.

4. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF UPI REPORT:

-- SOME AMERICANS CAPTURED DURING THE INDOCHINA WAR ARE ALIVE IN NORTH VIETNAM, A DEFECTOR FROM THE COMMUNIST ARMED FORCES SAID THURSDAY.

-- THE DEFECTOR, WHO ASKED TO REMAIN UNIDENTIFIED SO VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS WOULD NOT RETALIATE AGAINST HIS FAMILY, SAID THE FACT AMERICANS WERE LIVING IN NORTH VIETNAM WAS "COMMON KNOWLEDGE" IN HIS HOMETOWN OF HAIPHONG AND AMONG HIS ARMED FORCES COMRADES.

-- THE DEFECTOR, INTERVIEWED IN BANGKOK, SAID "A NUMBER OF AMERICANS" ARE KNOWN TO BE LIVING IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY, IN THE AREA CLOSEST TO THE CHINESE BORDER.

-- "THEY ARE SAID TO BE MOVED AROUND FAIRLY OFTEN," HE SAID.

-- HIS REMARKS WERE SIMILAR TO A STATEMENT GIVEN TO UPI IN SAIGON IN 1975 BY A HIGH-RANKING COMMUNIST OFFICIAL WHO SAID THE AMERICANS WERE MOSTLY FORMER PILOTS WHO HAD CHOSEN TO LIVE AS FARMERS RATHER THAN REMAIN IN PRISON.

-- SIMILAR STORIES OF FORMER U.S. PILOTS LIVING IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY WERE HEARD FROM COMMUNIST SOLDIERS BY AMERICAN REPORTERS AND OTHERS IN SAIGON AFTER THE FALL OF THE FORMER SOUTH VIETNAMESE CAPITAL APRIL 30, 1975.

-- EXCEPT FOR THE SENIOR OFFICIAL INTERVIEWED IN AUGUST

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1975 AT HIS HOME IN SAIGON, NO VIETNAMESE WHO SPOKE OF THE ALLEGEDLY ALIVE AMERICANS PREVIOUSLY CLAIMED TO HAVE FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE.

-- THE OFFICIAL, WHO WAS OF DEPUTY-MINISTERIAL RANK, SAID "A NUMBER OF AMERICANS' HAD FREELY CHOSEN TO TAKE UP NEW LIVES IN VIETNAM RATHER THAN REMAIN IN THE SO-CALLED HANOI HILTON AND OTHER PRISON CAMPS.

-- HE SAID "SEVERAL" HAD TAKEN VIETNAMESE WIVES AND HE ALSO INDICATED THAT THE AMERICANS WERE IN THE FAR NORTHERN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY, A REMOTE AREA WITH FEW ROADS AND POOR COMMUNICATIONS.

-- THE U.S. GOVERNMENTS LISTS 29 MEN KNOWN CAPTURED ALIVE IN VIETNAM ON WHOM NO FURTHER INFORMATION IS KNOWN, AND ANOTHER 474 MISSING IN ACTION. IN LAOS, THERE ARE TWO LISTED AS PRISONERS AND 233 MISSING.

-- A U.S. DELEGATION, HEADED BY UNITED AUTO WORKERS PRESIDENT LEONARD WOODCOCK, FLIES TO HANOI NEXT WEEK TO ATTEMPT TO FIND OUT IF THERE ARE ANY LIVING AMERICANS IN VIETNAM AND, IF NOT, WHAT HAPPENED TO THOSE STILL UNACCOUNT-

ED FOR.  
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## Message Attributes

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